College Reading Strategies

Reading is a substantial part of college learning. There are several powerful strategies that can help you get the most out of your reading assignments. One very effective strategy for college students is the SQ3R Reading System:

The SQ3R Reading System

**S = Survey**
Look over the contents of the text. Note chapter titles, which describe the information being covered. Look at the chapter subheadings, pictures, captions, graphs and diagrams. With advance knowledge of what information the book contains, you will be better focused when reading. Comprehension and retention will therefore increase.

**Q = Question**
When you read each chapter heading, turn the heading into a question. This will give focus to your reading and serve as a guide. When formulating your question use terms such as who, what, where, when, why, how, compare, contrast, describe, explain, list and trace. Write the question in the margin of your textbook.

Below are some examples of textbook headings turned into questions.

   Question based on the chapter subtitle above:
   *Describe the circumstances surrounding the collapse of the First Party System.*

2. American Government subheading: The Job of the President
   Question based on the chapter subtitle above:
   *List the duties of the President of the United States and describe in detail at least four Presidential constitutional responsibilities.*

**R = Read**
Step three requires that you actively participate in the learning process. Read the section with the intent of finding the answer to your question. Highlight the answers to these questions, along with any key points, examples and definitions. Try the sample below. See if you can find the answers to the questions.

Text Example: Introduction to Computers

Chapter Subheading: Types of Information Systems
Question: Define the term “information system.” List the different classifications of information systems.

Below is a paragraph from a text on this topic. See if you can find the answers to the question above.

"An information system is a collection of hardware, software, data, people, and procedures that are designed to generate information that supports the day-to-day, short range, and long-range activities of users in an organization. Information systems generally are classified into five categories: office information systems, transaction processing systems, management information systems, decision support systems, and expert systems. The following sections present each of these information systems."


**R = Recite**

After reading and highlighting a section of the text, recite the answers to your questions out loud. Are you able to answer in your own words? If not, re-read the section and formulate another response to the question. You may want to revise your question now that you are more familiar with the topic.

**R = Review**

After reading the whole assignment, review the chapter review questions as well as your own questions and answers. Re-read highlighted textbook material.

Explanation and examples from:
https://web.ccis.edu/offices/academicresources/writingcenter/studyskills/textbookreadingstrategies/thesq3rreadingsystem.aspx